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February 15th 2005.

Andy Miner
Sunnyvale Planning Department
456 West Olive Avenue
Sunnyvale, CA 94088 – 3707

Dear Andy

RE: Planet Granite at 815 Stewart Drive.

Thank you for your help at the Planning Commission study session last night. I have addressed the issues raised below.

Quantity of Parking: We have provided 3 spaces per 1,000sf of usable space, including the outdoor climbing. In Belmont, we have no on site parking. Climbers use the street parking in the neighborhood.

In Santa Clara, we are next door to City Beach, a 27,000 sf volleyball center, bar and restaurant. Across the street is Speed Ring, a 50,000 sf indoor go cart racing track. Planet Granite (13,400 sf) is by far the smallest of the three. All three establishments are busiest at the same time of day, 8.00pm, which makes for high parking demand at this peak time.

We share our parking with City Beach, and have 69 spaces between 40,000sf. This equates to 1.73 parking spaces per 1,000 sf, which is not sufficient. Having these three business located next to each other in old warehouses (which traditionally have minimal parking) has not been ideal. 815 Stewart Drive has nearly twice as much parking per square foot and we will no longer be next door to two much larger businesses that generate peak traffic at the same time as us.

Parking layout: I would like to work with you to see how we can best lay out the parking lot. The previous tenant of this building made the existing arrangement work and I can only assume that we can do the same. One idea would be to put up a sign at the exit from PG parking (on PG land) saying "Enter through Philips Parking Lot". We have the right to use their driveway, but not the right to put up a sign on their land saying "Planet Granite Parking".

Philips, which owns the land on which our parking easement is located, is trying to sell its property. It is unlikely that the existing building will find a user and the site will probably be sold to a developer. In PG's easement, Philips is obliged to build a new driveway into PG's row of parking if they move the existing driveway into their lot, as would be likely if they redeveloped their site. If this happens, all traffic flow and signage issues will go away.



PLANET GRANITE
ROCK CLIMBING, FITNESS & YOGA

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Security: We are obviously very interested in keeping folks out of our outdoor climbing area at night. We will do this in several ways. Firstly, there is an existing 18 feet high fence along much of the North property line between us and the school playing field. This was installed to keep their baseballs out of the Philips/PG parking lot. We will extend this to enclose the outdoor climbing. We would like to put limited barbed wire and/or anti climb paint at the top of the fence. We will have security cameras in the outdoor area and post signs letting people know that if they come in after dark they will not be allowed to use PG facilities again. For a climber, this should be a good deterrent.

You mentioned last night that we might be able to cover the structures at night. I think we could build an awning (which would double up as shade) over the structures. We could design this so that it would be possible to enclose the structures with the awning at night. I will draw some sketches to see if we could come up with something that is aesthetically pleasing and functional.

Cafe: We would have a small cafe in the facility serving coffee, power bars and pre-made sandwiches.

Nature of the neighborhood: The question of whether this use is suitable for this neighborhood came up. We get along well with our neighbors in the industrial part of Santa Clara where we are currently located. I will get some letters of recommendation to you next week from the nearby businesses. The Stewart Drive site is very close to the skate park, another recreational facility, and so this type of use has been accepted by the neighborhood. I know one of the concerns of the skate park is that it is noisy. We do not make significant noise.

Siding: We are intending to side the building with a combination of stucco and corrugated sheet metal. This matches the existing concrete walls and corrugated sheet metal mechanical screening.

We cannot use masonry or tilt up for two reasons. First, it is not structurally sound to have masonry or tilt up panels 60 feet tall without intervening floors to stiffen the panels. Secondly, the new and old parts of the building are open to each other, and a masonry or tilt up wall would put a barrier between the two halves and make the space unusable. This leaves us with two alternatives; stucco or metal siding. Single storey metal framed buildings that are 60 feet tall are flexible (a building of this height with multiple floors is much stiffer as each floor acts as a shear membrane). They move in high winds and earthquakes and if we were to stucco the 60 feet high wall, there is a good chance it would crack over time. Repairing this would not be easy.

Whilst this is a matter of personal taste, and everyone's is different, I like the combination of corrugated metal and stucco. It breaks up the building so it does not look monolithic and huge and has an appealing look to my eye. In my earlier proposal, I sent



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some photos of a building in San Francisco that is built in this way. I will attach them to this letter. Finally, modern baked on coatings on metal panels do not chalk or fade in the way that earlier metal paneling did. It will stand the test of time.

I hope this addresses all the points that were of interest to the planning commission. Please let me know if I can help in any way.

Yours sincerely,

Micky Lloyd



**PROPOSAL TO USE
815 STEWART DRIVE**

AS A

**ROCK CLIMBING GYM AND
HEALTH CLUB**

PROPOSAL for the City of Sunnyvale

January 12th, 2005

**Micky Lloyd, Owner
Mickylloyd2000@yahoo.com
530-902-4497**



SYNOPSIS

Planet Granite currently operates two indoor rock climbing gyms, one in Santa Clara and one in Belmont. We are a small mom-and-pop company. We propose building a new indoor rock climbing gym and fitness club in an existing vacant office building/data center on Stewart Drive. The Sunnyvale facility would replace our aging Santa Clara gym.

This proposal provides an overview of Planet Granite and the sport of indoor climbing. We also discuss the benefits of such a facility to the community of Sunnyvale.

The proposed site measures 55,763 sf. (with an additional adjacent 17,500 sf exclusive permanent easement) and so effectively measures 73,263 sf. The property is in an Industrial Zone (M-S). The site across the street is to be redeveloped as a new Lowes home improvement store. Our plans are to demolish approximately one third of the existing building and construct a new building up to 65 feet high at the rear of the lot. The zoning allows for 75 ft height.

We are applying for:

1. A use permit to use this site as a rock climbing gym and health club.
2. Permission to build an outdoor fenced landscaping and climbing area measuring approximately 4,000 to 5,000 sf.
3. Permission to increase the size of the building to 24,980 sf.
This can be granted by one of two approaches.
 - A) Accept that the permanent exclusive parking easement is part of the lot measurement and use a 35% FAR on the new total lot size.
or
 - B) Allow a building of greater than 35% on the legal lot as is allowed in the Zoning Code with a use permit.

In this proposal we address the Review Criteria for Projects Greater than 35% FAR (City handout, January 2000). We also discuss the City's Economic and Community Benefit Criteria (City handout, January 2000).



PROPOSAL TO USE 815 STEWART DRIVE AS A ROCK CLIMBING GYM AND HEALTH CLUB

I have written this proposal in two halves. The first is a description of Planet Granite (PG), our facilities and programs. The second talks about what PG would like to build on the Stewart Drive site.

PLANET GRANITE

Planet Granite has two rock climbing gyms, both in the Bay Area. We opened our Santa Clara facility in 1994 and then opened our second facility in Belmont in 2002.

PG occupies a 13,400 square foot warehouse building in Santa Clara. In Belmont we restored a derelict 1949 theater and built a 19,000 square foot facility, while preserving the exterior of this landmark building. The facilities have climbing structures up to 50 feet tall within the buildings. The climbing structures are covered with simulated rock features which people climb. Using the best safety equipment, participants climb the walls and towers. All wall climbing is completed with a partner who operates the safety equipment.

We also provide a range of fitness and strength equipment and have group fitness rooms where we teach yoga, stretching and spinning.

Planet Granite is a small company, owned entirely by its employees that relishes its “Mom and Pop” feel. We focus on developing close ties to the South Bay communities in which we are located.

Our facilities have been assets to the community by providing a new and interesting sport for families and individuals. I will write about a number of aspects of PG including:

- The Climbing
- The School
- Children’s Programs
- Customers
- Employees
- Community Involvement

The Climbing

Each PG has high climbing structures which are climbed using ropes, as well as bouldering structures which are around 12 feet high and can be climbed without a rope. The surface of the structures have thousands of recessed nuts onto which we bolt climbing holds to create routes to the top. The routes range in difficulty from easy climbs with big holds placed close together suitable for kids and beginners to extremely hard climbs on overhanging terrain that only experts can get up. We constantly change the routes to provide fresh challenges for our climbers.

PG has standard weight lifting and aerobic fitness equipment for people to warm up on. Members and visitors also enjoy changing facilities with lockers and saunas.

The School and Programs

PG delivers introductory lessons that teach novices the required safety skills to climb indoors. We also teach leading and repelling classes, further skills that enhance a climber's safety.

Beyond the climbing basics, PG also offers a variety of climbing technique lessons for all levels of climbers. We run clinics to improve footwork, overhanging climbing, balance and an array of other skills. We are very interested in building a sense of community amongst our climbers and twice a week we have a "bouldering night" where novice and expert climbers join into groups to set and climb each other's routes. This is one of our most popular programs and is a great environment for people to meet other climbers.

Twice a year we have competitions that have become popular events with large attendance. These are relaxed, self scoring competitions, for all levels of climber where the emphasis is on having fun rather than winning. At the end of these events we serve up pizza, give out literally hundreds of prizes, and encourage everyone to get to know each other.

Children's Programs

PG hosts children's birthday parties, youth climbing leagues and PG Kid's Camps. Climbing is a great way to safely teach not only physical coordination, but also self-confidence. Many children return year after year to have their birthday parties at PG. Parents frequently join their children, learning how to work the safety ropes and/or climb. It is an excellent opportunity for parents and children to learn and experience a new sport together.

We run a youth recreational climbing club that meets after school once a week for an hour and a half. We also have a kids climbing team that meets twice a week and focuses on training kids who wish to climb at the highest level. Each year, some of the kids in our team go to the National finals and we have had National Champions in our program. We also host competitions for the JCCA, the national junior climbing league.

In Belmont, we have recently teamed up with a local charter school which does not have recreational facilities. We will be teaching their students a climbing oriented sports program to help them earn their physical education credit. Kids come in for an hour and a half, twice a week and climb. This is a new program that we would like to develop and grow.

We run events for both the Boy and Girl scouts that enable both of these groups to earn badges for climbing skills.

Furthermore, we run summer camps for three branches of the YMCA, the Albert Schultz Jewish Community Center, and the parks and recreation departments of most of the peninsular and south bay cities.

Community involvement is the cornerstone on which our business is built. The founding principles of Planet Granite are to create world class climbing gyms in the Bay Area and to reach out to the community and introduce this sport to all. Most of the programs that we offer to not-for-profit groups are run at or below cost.

Customers

Over 150,000 different people have visited PG since we opened in 1994. PG customers fall into three major groups:

Adult climbers: Climbing appeals to a broad cross section of people, with the majority of the adult climbers who use the gym being aged from 25 to 50 years old. These climbers range from novices trying climbing for the first time to experts training for expeditions in the Sierras and overseas.

Children: Approximately one third of the visitors to PG are children ranging in age from 7 to 18 years old. See Children's Programs above for additional details.

Schools, groups and corporations: We have run teambuilding events for over 200 schools, not-for-profit groups and corporations, including Intel, HP, Cisco, 3Com, Netscape, Applied Materials, AMD, National Semiconductor, Oracle and most of the other major Silicon Valley companies. These groups run the full gambit from a collection of at risk kids brought in for free by the Santa Clara firefighters through private instruction for Steve Jobs (of Apple Computer) and his son, who we taught to climb.

Safety

Planet Granite places the greatest importance on the safety of our climbers. Our belay safety lessons are limited to a maximum of four climbers per instructor, thus ensuring close attention during this important lesson for novice climbers. We require our climbers to use a safety device called a Gri Gri whilst top roping, which we provide on each rope in the gym. A Gri Gri is much more expensive than other belay devices, but is significantly safer.

Employees

PG employs approximately 30 staff at each location: 8 are full-time senior staff; the remainder are part-time junior staff (most of whom are 17-25 years old). All part-time staff are trained in customer service, retail operations, climber instruction and safety. Working part-time at PG is an excellent opportunity for people entering the work force as it is a much more team oriented and interesting job than the retail and food service jobs that are often young persons' early jobs. PG provides young climbers with an opportunity to develop professional skills in

a relaxed, sports-oriented environment. Most of our employees are in fact avid climbers and bring this enthusiasm to the job.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS TO SUNNYVALE

Beyond being a successful business, employer and community supporter, PG offers direct and indirect financial benefits to the city of Sunnyvale. PG is also an amenity and source of civic pride.

Testimonials and Letters of Support

Enclosed are over 300 letters from local not for profit community groups (YMCA, Albert Schultz Jewish Community Center, Foundry School, Santa Clara firefighters kids program), schools, parents of kids in our climbing team, neighboring businesses around our facility in Santa Clara that we prepared when asking the City of Belmont for permission to build our facility there. We think that it shows the strength of the bond that we seek to forge with the communities that we work in. Over 100 Belmont residents attended the Planning Commission hearing in Belmont to give support of our project. We have no doubt that there would be similar support from the Sunnyvale community should you wish to move forward with our use of this building.

Amenity & Civic Pride

PG is an amenity that is valued by the residents, schools and businesses in Santa Clara and Belmont. The opportunity to climb and workout during or at the end of a day is becoming increasingly important to people who work long hours in the Bay Area. Some years back, when the Mayor of Santa Clara had the Mayor of their "sister city" in Japan visit, PG was one of the sites she chose to show him. Climbing is an excellent way to shrug off the stresses of modern life as it is impossible to think of the troubles of work when hanging on to the side of a rock. Furthermore, people typically go directly to PG from work. This delays their commute home and causes less congestion during the busiest times.

Our facility in Belmont is located on a corner lot on the El Camino and is the first building in Belmont as you come from San Mateo. It is the gateway to the City, and one of the more architecturally significant buildings in Belmont. It had been vacant for 4 years and was covered with graffiti when we bought it. Planet Granite rebuilt the theater behind its original facade. We planted new trees and landscaping along the El Camino and North Road frontages and restored this landmark to its former glory.

Environmentally Sound Building Practices

When building the Belmont facility, we devoted significant time and thought to how to be environmentally responsible. We minimized waste and maximized reuse in the following ways:

- a) We donated and shipped the old seats (1,000) to the Colorado Free University. The projectors and other theater equipment was given to a not for profit theater group in San Francisco.
- b) All metal in the old building was separated from other waste and recycled containers (approximately 6 full 30 yard bins)

- c) The structural 2 by 14 lumber in the old bow truss roof was taken down by hand, cleaned of nails, recertified and then used in the construction of a new mezzanine level.
- d) Other lumber was hand separated and recycled for pulping.

Recycling these materials, particularly the lumber, was extremely labor intensive and expensive. We were not required to do this, but this is the way we chose to work. As an employee owned business without external shareholders, we are free to do business in a less profitable but more responsible way.

Furthermore, rather than use air conditioning, we installed extensive fans so the facility is energy efficient as well as skylights and windows throughout to reduce daytime lighting.

THE 815 STEWART PROJECT

Planet Granite Santa Clara

If we go ahead with our Sunnyvale project we intend to close our existing Santa Clara facility as soon as the new gym is finished. The new Sunnyvale gym will be our flagship and one of the biggest and best climbing gyms in the Nation.

The Existing Building

The current building at 815 Stewart Drive is a concrete tilt up office/data center built in the late 1960s. The walls are 18 feet high, topped with a metal mansard. It has a number of windows on the Stewart facade, but the other elevations are blank concrete with some doors and fenced areas where the sprinkler and other services enter the building. There is large old cooling equipment located in a fenced area at the exterior of the North East corner of the building. Behind the building there is a small loading ramp and a driveway allowing cars to circumnavigate the building. There is parking on both sides and the front of the building totaling approximately 6 per 1,000 spaces. Some of this parking is located on a permanent exclusive parking easement (measuring approximately 17,500 sf) on the lot adjacent to the property.

The Proposed Building

We would like to tear down the rear 55 feet of the building (approximately 7,700 sf) and build in its place and across the rear driveway/loading ramp a new structure measuring 12,100 sf. The new building would be between 32 and 65 feet tall and would have a two "shed" roofs that slope towards the North end of the building. .

I have enclosed basic plans of the proposed structure.

The exterior of the new structure would be clad in a metal siding similar to the existing mansard. We would install roll up doors towards the top of the South elevation of the addition to allow light and ventilation. This will also have the effect of reducing the apparent height of the structure. We have also located the new, tall portion of the building towards the rear of the structure which will reduce its bulk as seen from Stewart as the existing structure will hide much of it. We followed this approach in Belmont and most first time visitors are amazed by how tall the building is on the inside as it not at all imposing from the street.

Lot Coverage

One of the issues to be resolved here is the lot coverage. The new building would measure 24,980 sf. The legal lot measures 55,763 sf. Adjacent to the lot is an exclusive permanent parking easement over a further 17,500 sf. This is in effect land that we own though it is not included in the measurement of the legal lot. Thus the total effective lot measures 73,263 sf. At a 35 % coverage ratio, we could build a 25,600 sf building. If the City accepts that the permanent exclusive parking easement should be considered as part of the lot, then the addition conforms to the zoning codes and is permitted.

An alternative way to deal with this would be to allow us to build what is in effect a warehouse building of up to 50% lot coverage on the legal lot (the proposed structure falls well within this limit at 45% FAR). This is permitted in this district with a use permit (section 19.32.070,b,2).

To allow a greater than 35% FAR the City must come to one of the following two findings:

1. *The proposed use is desirable and will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property improvements or uses within the immediate vicinity and within the Zoning district.*

Planet Granite will provide a valuable recreational facility for the school, industrial and residential users in the immediate vicinity as well as throughout the City. As a recreational use it will not discharge toxics into the ground to harm the school and retail uses that immediately abut the property. Indeed, Planet Granite is the ideal buffer use between an industrial area and the adjacent school.

Furthermore, PG will not remove a real industrial site from the City as this site is too small for most modern industrial uses and it seems unlikely that one would want to encourage an intensive and potentially hazardous industrial use on a lot that shares a property line with a school. PG will not blight the industrial potential of nearby lots as both lots that abut the 815 Stewart site also abut the school and so are already subject to greater restrictions than our use would put on the use of their land.

With regards to our suitability as a neighbor to other industrial uses, we have included in the package of testimonial letters about a half dozen letters from our industrial neighbors at our Santa Clara site. We have always been friendly with our neighbors and we have no doubt that this would also be the case at the site on Stewart.

2. *The proposed use attains the objectives and purposes of the general plan of the City of Sunnyvale.*

The general plan seeks to locate recreational and athletic uses in industrial districts where these are auxiliary to the industrial uses in the neighborhood and when they serve the surrounding industrial and residential districts. This can be permitted with a use permit (Section 19.22.030). Planet Granite is exactly the sort of use that serves the recreational and fitness needs of our neighbors at this site.

Review Criteria for Projects Greater than 35% FAR (City handout, January 2000)

The review criteria for making the decision about granting greater than 35% FAR are listed below, along with ways in which PG would meet these criteria.

- 1.a *Is there sufficient current and future land use and transportation capacity to incorporate this project?* Planet Granite is an off peak traffic generator. People who work in the area come here after work, thus delaying their commute home.
- 1.b *Does the project use and design contribute positively to a City image and character that reflects current and future 'High Tech' Silicon Valley?* The Sunnyvale General Plan supports a variety of uses and this project gives that variety to the area.
- 1.c *Does the project include minor additions to the building for special function purposes?* The additional space enables PG to build the high climbing required for our use. We are adding less than 20% to the building area.
- 1.d *Does the project demonstrate exemplary architecture and design? (Each industry has building designs and forms that best serve their functions and business needs).* This facility will be custom built to provide a building that is superbly suited to its use as a climbing gym. This will be one of, if not the, best climbing gym in the Country.
- 1.e *How is the calculation of the 'effective' FAR being conducted? Does the size of the project warrant a different method of calculating the FAR?* The project has a permanent exclusive easement on the 17,500 sf of landscaped parking lot adjacent to the lot. This should be included in the lot size when calculating the FAR. The 65% of non built land on a lot should be dedicated to parking and landscaping, as is the land on this easement. Since PG will have control over and exclusive use of this land, it should be included in the total used to calculate allowable building size.

Economic and Community Benefit Criteria (City handout, January 2000)

- 1. *Does the project implement the goals of the Economic Prosperity Program?* Facilities like Planet Granite, which provide amenities for people working in Silicon Valley, help make employers choose this area to locate in. Quality of life for employees is an increasingly important component of an employer's location decisions.
- 4. *To what extent does this project provide resident and/or youth employment opportunities for now or in the future?* Planet Granite will employ approximately 30 staff at this location. The vast bulk of these employees are under the age of 25. PG provides a superb environment for people at the beginning of their work life. We reach out to the local community and offer interesting and rewarding jobs to young people. PG is a perfect place to get one's first taste of the workplace where young people can learn work, customer service and people skills in a fun environment. During the summer months PG hires a large number of extra help from among the local student communities. PG also hires yoga, pilates and personal training teachers. These are jobs that go to local residents typically a little older than our desk staff and climbing instructors.
- 8. *Can the applicant identify other community benefits that could be attributed to the proposed project?* Community involvement is the cornerstone on which our business is built. The founding principles of the Planet Granite are to create world class climbing gyms in the Bay

Area and to reach out to the community and introduce this sport to all. The programs that we offer to not-for-profit groups (listed above and shown in attached testimonial letters) are run at, or below, cost. Planet Granite makes donations to any local school that asks for one (a policy we have pursued for a decade) and tries in every way to help with the local community.

Parking

The existing structure has over 6 parking spaces per thousand sf. With the new square footage, we would still have approximately 4 parking spaces per thousand. In Santa Clara, we have only 2 per thousand spaces. Our business is an off peak traffic generator. People who work in the area come here after work, thus delaying their commute home.

Exterior Climbing

We would like to fence an area of approximately 5,000 sf next to the North West corner of the new building and build some climbing structures, mostly 14 feet tall, along with landscaping to include trees, scrubs and benches.

Landscaping

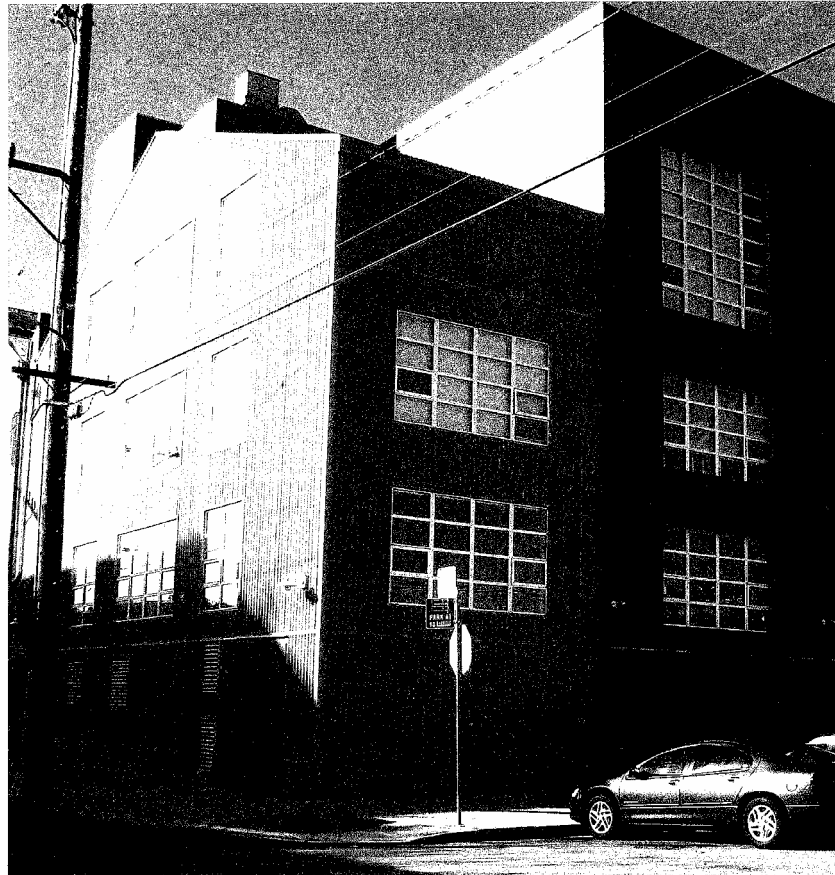
The existing landscaping does not meet the current requirements. We would plant 4 new street trees and further landscaping in the new climbing/landscaping area. We have not yet designed this area and would like to do so in consultation with the planning department.

I hope this letter paints a comprehensive enough picture for you to give us a preliminary opinion of the City's feelings about this project. we am very excited about building our new South Bay gym at this site and would be very happy to answer any questions that you have.

Sincerely,



Micky Lloyd
Enclosures



**DETAILS OF STUCCO AND CORRUGATED METAL BUILDING
AT 19TH AND ALABAMA IN SAN FRANCISCO.**

The 45,000SF Building was completed in 2003.



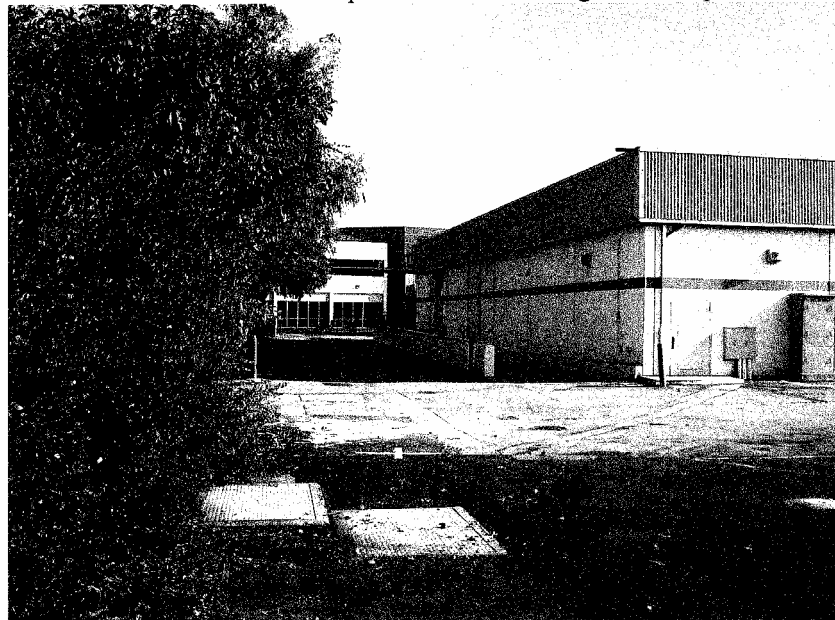
**DETAILS OF STUCCO AND CORRUGATED METAL BUILDING
AT 19TH AND ALABAMA IN SAN FRANCISCO.**

The 45,000SF Building was completed in 2003.

South Elevation Facing Stewart Drive



South West Corner. This portion of the building is to be replaced.



West Elevation. The rear (left) portion will be replaced. Page 17 of 17



East Side of Building.

The cooling towers will be removed, the landscaping will remain.

